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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/577,028

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Antje Ziemer

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4892

4743

7590

09/29/2009

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EXAMINER

BOYER, CHARLES I

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1796

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

09/29/2009

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/577,028

Applicant(s)

ZIEMER ET AL.

Examiner

Charles I. Boyer

Art Unit

1796

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 July 2009.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 and 15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 9-13 and 15 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3/15/07
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election with traverse of group I in the reply filed on July 2, 2009 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that in the present invention, the common special technical feature in *all* claims is polymeric particles coated with at least one surfactant and at least one solvent of general formula (I). There may be a lack of unity only if this common technical feature lacks novelty or is obvious.

This is not found persuasive because as the claims of group I are neither novel, nor unobvious, the invention lacks unity.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1 and 3-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Smith et al, US 2007/0167560.

Smith et al teach a superabsorbent polymer that is post-treated with aluminum oxide, aluminum sulfate, amphoteric surfactant, and a glycol ether (§109). As this reference meets all material limitations of the claims at hand, the reference is anticipatory.

3. Claims 1, 2, and 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Birkel et al, US 2003/0035783.

Birkel et al teach a hair gel comprising a superabsorbent polymer, a mixture of nonionic surfactants, and ethanol (§32). As this reference meets all material limitations of the claims at hand, the reference is anticipatory.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-4 and 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gartner et al, US 6,916,864.

Gartner et al teach polyelectrolyte emulsions for the manufacture of superabsorbent polymers (see abstract). One phase of the emulsion contains both organic solvents and surfactants, as well as a dispersant (col. 4, lines 49-59). After the polymer is formed, the polymer may be treated with mixtures of inversion agents,

including nonionic surfactants, glycol ethers, and titanium dioxide (col. 9, lines 27-52, and col. 17, lines 11-19). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to contact, i.e. coat these polymers with these inversion agents with a reasonable expectation of successfully obtaining an effective SAP.

3. Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smith et al, US 2007/0254177.

Smith et al teach a superabsorbent polymer which may be chemically post-crosslinked with nonionic surfactants, organic solvents such as ethanol (¶68 and 69), and aluminum salts (¶45). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to contact, i.e. coat these polymers with these post-crosslinking agents with a reasonable expectation of successfully obtaining an effective SAP.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Charles I. Boyer whose telephone number is 571 272 1311. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 9:30 to 6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Harold Pyon can be reached on 571 272 1498. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Charles I Boyer
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1796

/Charles I Boyer/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1796